



**Seven Basins Watershed Council, Inc.**

a 501(c)(3) non profit organization

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## **Comments on BLM Western Oregon Plan Revisions January 2008**

The Seven Basins Watershed Council is recognized by the Jackson County Commissioners as the official watershed council representing the Evans Valley, Sams Valley and South of Rogue River from Kane Creek to Birdseye Creek. BLM-managed lands comprise a significant area in the watershed. The Seven Basins Watershed Council has collaborated with BLM on matters related to fire hazard reduction and fish habitat improvement within the watershed.

The Seven Basins Watershed is located in an extreme wildfire risk area. Our watershed also contains important summer steelhead, winter steelhead and coho salmon habitat. Due to granitic soils, erosion from unimproved roads and sediment have been identified as major factors limiting watershed health in the West Fork of Evans Creek subwatershed.

Reference: Jackson County Fire Plan Risk Assessment [www.co.jackson.or.us](http://www.co.jackson.or.us)  
Seven Basins Community Wildfire Protection Plan [www.sevenbasins.org](http://www.sevenbasins.org)  
Seven Basins Watershed Assessment [www/sevenbasins.org](http://www.sevenbasins.org)  
Rogue Basin Watershed Health Factors Assessment  
[www.oregon.gov/OWEB/restoration\\_priorities.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/OWEB/restoration_priorities.shtml)

Based on these factors we feel that whatever plan is adopted it must provide adequate protection for streams and habitat for native fish as well as improving forest health and wildfire resiliency. To this end we would like whatever plan is adopted to incorporate the following:

- 1) Repair damage done to streams and habitat as a result of previous land uses;
- 2) Identify possible adverse consequences to streams and habitat as a result of proposed future land uses;
- 3) Monitor for those adverse consequences during implementation of the land use proposed in the plan;
- 3) Provide for restoration of streams and forests damaged (negatively impacted?) as a result of land uses implemented under the plan;
- 5) Cease or modify any land uses that cause stream (environmental) damage that can

not be mitigated under the plan.

Based on these considerations the following are our areas of specific concern:

- 1) The management plan should significantly decrease fire hazard throughout the watershed and should increase the resilience of forests to wildfire.
- 2) The management plan should address the damage done to streams by deferred maintenance of the existing road network, including replacing culverts that are fish passage barriers.
- 3) The management plan should address illegal activities such as drug activities, dumping and OHV use in unauthorized areas.
- 4) The management plan should provide for riparian buffers that avoid significant impacts to water quality or fish habitat. The plan should include restoration of currently degraded riparian areas.
- 5) The management plan should implement effective monitoring of both intended and unintended consequences.

The importance played by our native fish, streams and forests in the culture and economy of our region is key to our concerns. For a large segment of our population it is a quality of life issue. For a larger segment, our native fish and forests are a cornerstone of their livelihood, affecting not only those employed directly but also indirectly.